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IMAGING

'IMAGING'

Art Education Interns

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ACKOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is about an educational "journey" shared by the children and teachers of Westmount Park Elementary School and the teachers and students of the Diploma in Art Education of Concordia University.

Hélène Gagné and I have tried to share some of the insights gained in guiding the interns; Stan Horner, as Director of the Diploma programme, supported and participated in the project; Rhona Shapiro, a graduate student, who acted as an assistant and an observer, has provided a summary. Finally, each of the student teachers involved has written a personal account of a significant experience.

On behalf of the University team, I want to thank Sharon Browman, elementary consultant for the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal for her enthusiastic support. We are all grateful to Richard Jack, principal of Westmount Park School, and to the teachers, for giving us the opportunity to work with them and with the children. It has been a rich, meaningful, and valuable part of our internship year, one in which we have all grown, both personally and professionally.

Leah Sherman
Professor of Fine Arts,
Art Education Department,
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Concordia University.

PREFACE

Leah Sherman

How to provide an elementary practice teaching experience in the teaching of art when there are virtually no art specialists in the schools for student teachers to work with? How to provide art education interns with the support structure they need to have an effective apprenticeship in a school situation? A possible model presented itself when the needs of a school and the needs of the university overlapped. An elementary consultant (Sharon Browman) saw the opportunity to bring more art to the children in a school, and we saw the opportunity to create the context for teaching art in an elementary school for a month.

Rhona Shapiro has described the procedures we followed and the structure we chose. I will try to focus on several key issues that emerged as the experience unfolded. Space does not permit detail, so that only the significant threads can be noted. In reality, these threads were not separate, but overlapping and interwoven.

The first one I will call the "Contextual" -the framework created by the acting out of our value systems ... the way in which the values and attitudes of the university team and the school community interacted and related to one another. Although neither group was completely homogeneous in terms of the things that were important to them, the university teachers and students seemed to share an educational philosophy and an approach to the teaching of art. This approach can be characterized as open-ended and relativistic, viewing art activity as having intrinsic value for the child, and focusing on the child's personal imagery. The school population presented a more diverse picture, with some attitudes towards children's art reflecting larger issues in the school system where achievement is a prime objective and the product is extremely important.

The art education interns' idealism was soon tempered by the demands of teaching large groups of children, all at different stages of development in art. In the interchange afforded by our plan, the classroom teachers became more aware of the potential of different art media, and the possibilities for learning inherent in art activities.

A second thread which I began to follow from the beginning was the "dynamics of interpersonal interaction". I viewed this process primarily from the vantage point of my presence in the art room, and secondly, from the perspective of the staff room. In the art room, student teachers interacted with each other, with their advisors, with the classroom teachers who accompanied their classes, and of course, with the children. When we were not teaching, we spent some of our time in the staff room and became a part of its culture for a short time.

During our first week in the school, we were preoccupied with finding our shape as a group, and with becoming a team. Within this team, roles had to be established and were constantly changing. Students became teachers, teachers became observers, observers were sometimes participants, leaders were also learners. The art students were making the transition from student to teacher, and from artist to educator. They were both expert and novice; at the end of a period of study in art, and beginners in the practice of teaching.

As we began to trust each other, we co-operated in the care and use of the room and in the rich learning experience afforded by the project. Feedback on lessons

taught was exchanged, and discoveries made were shared. The group acquired a life and momentum of its own.

Gradually, the team began to interact with the staff of the school -both as a group, and as individuals. As the student teachers began to communicate with the classroom teachers they worked with, the value of their art activities with the children became more apparent, and in some cases, teachers saw the connection of art with the rest of the curriculum. A sense of common educational purpose developed.

Through sharing the staff room, we learned more about the day to day concerns of the teachers and began to appreciate the pressures under which they worked.

The third and dominant thread which ran through the experience was "the evolution of a methodology for teaching art and the common problems which emerged". The interns faced the usual problems which occur in the early stages of learning to teach. Because of the unique organization of the internship, these problems could be dealt with immediately, and solutions attempted in the next lesson. We were all in the same school, sharing the same art room and talking to each other every day. When I noticed a recurring problem, it could be raised and discussed during our lunch hour meetings, without the usual delay and diffusion which occurs when student teachers are in different schools, meeting once a week at the university for seminars. There were the recurring questions of teaching strategy: "how do we get and hold the children's attention? how do we make our motivation concrete and meaningful to the various age level? how do we teach the group and the individual? what do we do with children who finish early? what do we do with children who do not want to do anything? how do we plan for and implement realistic procedures for the distribution of materials and clean up?

None of these issues are real until one is actually trying to get some objective across to 26 living, squirming, feeling, thinking 9 year olds from different neighbourhoods, and various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, who have just come from a gym class or who are in the midst of a "bake sale". We learned how important it is to listen to answers as well as to ask questions, to change our directions in mid stream, and to have prepared alternative back up routes. We realized that our lesson plans need to be considered in a larger context, and that sequencing occurs horizontally as well as vertically.

Larger questions arose for which the answers will have to wait for more experience and experimentation. We could agree on the questions, but not on the answers. One issue was the relationship of image making to the learning of art language, such as the use of the art elements of colour, line and texture. Both Andrée and Bonnie have written about this problem.

As noted by Rhona, we were all impressed with the phenomenon of the "disappearing figure", and how the older children avoided the inclusion of the self in their work ... We will need to explore the reasons and remedies for the lack of confidence in representation as the child grows older. The success of certain activities, such as the collective murals and the combination of clay and drawing in the "games we play" (see Marie-Lise) , suggested some clues as to further directions to explore in the teaching of art to children.

We all came away from the experience convinced that teaching art is our vocation and that art experiences are valuable and important for the children. It is not only the learning or teaching of skills and techniques and the making of images that is significant, but the modelling of attitudes towards art and experience that we as art teachers are responsible for: enthusiasm, sharing, respect for materials, good craftmanship, problem solving, inventiveness and authenticity.

INTRODUCTION

Hélène Gagné

As soon as Leah Sherman told me about and showed me her plan for an internship at the primary level, I knew it could work well because of the "formula" implied. The formula was at first a simple frame of experience designed to channel and gather people in a studio, to insure functional and ordered links and to guarantee that our needs and interests would be fulfilled. One could, however, see immediately that the prevailing principle was to open the experience rather than to enclose it. So, am I right to speak of a formula? Not really, for the pattern used was neither prescriptive, nor definitive. The main concern was to provide the student-teachers with a living experience of art at the elementary level, that which calls for more than a mere formula. And the plan was carried through beyond the formula.

It seems more appropriate to me to refer to the pattern of the internship as being that of a system, an open unit, which, grafted to the school body, was designed to function in harmony with the already existing internal systems. True, we came from the outside but full of the spirit of art embodied in the youth and enthusiasm of the student-teachers and we came to implement within the school something that would survive both in one's memory and reality. We hoped for buds of art to bloom in the school and we are ready to care for them in the near future and forever, if possible, to insure a living bond between the school and the university, the reality and the mind. We found in the school generous cooperation, a challenging milieu and, above all, human beings ready to try an adventure. What started out to be simple "formula" became very soon

a living system of exchange, most precious and most rewarding for all those who have been involved so far and, we hope, those who will be later. We do not feel that we have already achieved our goal but we are sure to have begun a life process.

Observer's Report — Rhona Shapiro

From January 18,1982 until February 12, 1982, I was involved in a pilot project at a local elementary school. Seven art education interns were given an opportunity to teach art under the direct supervision of three university professors. My role was that of participant observer (chart 1), in charge of materials and supplies and acting as recorder for the project. I was present at almost all times during the four week period and kept as detailed and descriptive a log as feasible, including notes on what the interns taught their students, the students' process and their products. Slides were taken to supplement the written description. A record was kept of supplies available, supplies used and their relation to the lessons taught.

Prior to the project, several visits were taken to the school to better understand the setting. Firstly, the principal was contacted. He accepted the proposal subject to confirmation by the teachers in the school. The classroom teachers were subsequently consulted and they agreed to co-operate. Thirteen out of fifteen volunteered to participate in the project.

Once the proposal was accepted, the university team began to plan the curriculum. The curriculum planned was based on the thematic approach to the teaching of art. Each of the four weeks had a basic theme using core art media (chart 3).

It was decided that each art education intern would be assigned two home-rooms to teach (one primary and one elementary). Each home-room would have two art classes twice a week (eight in total). Each intern would assist another intern as well. It was also planned that when the art intern was not teaching, she would be available as a resource person to the classroom teachers assigned

to her. The classroom teacher would accompany the students to the art room and remain as an observer to assist in recording the project. The proposed roles of the various people were also discussed at length, and an attempt was made at establishing some guidelines (chart 2).

A tentative schedule was drawn up and proposed to the classroom teachers. At this time, the interns had their first opportunity to see the art room. The room was then re-organized and stocked with supplies to be ready for the following week.

Week I

On monday, January 18, 1982, the project commenced. The interns were very excited to begin -and yet nervous at the same time. They had many different teaching concerns to consider. There was a bus strike, as well as sub-zero temperatures and heavy snowfall, which prevented many of the children from coming to school. Even though the classroom numbers were relatively small, teaching problems began to emerge. Due to the fact that the interns were relatively inexperienced, they had some difficulties in establishing concrete motivation. Their teaching experience up to that point was Saturday morning art classes at the university (approximatively 16 weeks -2 hours each lesson) and a six week internship in a high school. As this was their first elementary school experience, the adaptation to the younger age level required the learning of new teaching skills.

The role of the intern began to emerge as that of the main performer in the project. They were teachers, and they were students. There was some sense of competition between them, and pressures for achievement were felt. They wanted to please, and to perform well. At first, they were vulnerable, and sensi-

tive to criticism. They had to learn to accept feedback, and to apply it immediately. Soon, the interns learned to share, and to become aware of each others needs.

Their role, however, became somewhat complicated by that of the classroom teacher. Some of the classroom teachers felt responsible when their students misbehaved. Interaction between students and noise level are both issues that classroom teachers must control in their room. Some differences between the values of the classroom teachers, and those shared by the student teachers' team began to emerge. The issues of right and wrong became evident and they had to be resolved.

Week II

On Monday of the second week, there was a Professional day, and Professor Sherman took the opportunity to conduct an art workshop for the teachers. The purpose of the workshop was to involve them in some of the art materials and processes being used with the children while focusing on their image making.

In the discussion following the activities, some of the teachers voiced their concerns about how they could continue teaching art to their classes and wanted ideas for art projects. It became evident that their needs for preparation in the teaching of art could not be met within the time and scope of the art project.

For the interns, the second week brought about a more intense focusing on the curriculum. Some questions of concern were:

Who are the children?

What do they understand?

What can they understand? and

How can we get their interest?

During this week, the interns also came to realize that the lessons they had planned at the university had to be changed. They had to adjust the sequencing and content of their curriculum outlines as the childrens' responses revealed their real needs.

Clay, as a form of expression, was introduced during the second week, and proved to be a very stimulating medium. The problem of what to do with the clay products was evident in the planning stages and compounded itself at the school. What to do with the product was the unanswered dilema. There was no kiln, so the clay could not be bisqued, and as it dried it became very britle. Many of the pieces broke and this proved to be disappointing to a few of the children.

Week III

During Week III of the project, the social reality of school life became evident. The tensions amongst the children, behaviour problems, and the pressures placed on the teachers form the school system became apparent. The gradual integration of the team into school life helped us to deal with these situations.

This week the children's art work focused on games, "playing games with myself and a friend". It was interesting to observe how the child drew themselves and how this changed as he got older. The younger children

generally tended to draw themselves larger and as one of the most important components of the game. As the children got older, the image of themselves tended to become smaller until in the very oldest groups, where the game became very carefully detailed there were absolutely no people participating!

The lessons involving "myself and a game" using clay as the means of expression gave totally different results than the paintings of the same subject.

The images of myself or a friend were done in clay, and then the game itself was done on a large two-dimensional surface. The combination of three and two dimensional work proved to be an exceptionally good way of getting the "me" back into the total gestalt of the project. Somehow no matter what a student did in clay, he could accept it. Any shape he wasn't pleased with could easily be transformed. However, with paint or crayon an unpleasing area cannot be reworked as easily.

During this period, it was also interesting to note how the same intern could teach two different age groups of children, motivate them in a similar manner, give them the same materials to work with, and get totally different results. By week IV, the interns were able to change their strategy because they knew and understood the children better.

Collectives (or murals) were also initiated during the third week, and proved to be cery successful. It was a type of project where every student could participate, and no matter what the quality of the imagery, everyone's work was included. The children learned from one another through the sharing of ideas, and morale was high as they worked together co-operatively on the group projects.

Week IV

During Week IV (the final week) of the project, the interns were feeling very relaxed and confident. It was during this week that the cumulative effect of teaching became evident. The interns' self-motivation increased and the room became a living organism. Many of the children came to the art room at lunch-time, or after school to finish an assignment.

It was also during this last week that the values of the classroom teachers and interns came together. The students realized that more focused motivation resulted in more intensive output from the students. Both the interns and the classroom teachers were satisfied by the children's involvement in the activities.

The last few days were spent getting all the work together, and hanging it in the form of a "mini-exhibition" for parents to enjoy on parent-teacher night. The students, classroom teachers, and interns were very proud of the body of work that had been completed, and the school as a whole was pleased with the lively transformation of the dull hallways.

Once back at the university, the team had a chance to sit back and review the experience. We agreed that there had been many common areas of learning including classroom management and curriculum. Everyone felt that planning lessons in the abstract was very different to finding the right thing to teach in the actual classroom situation. We were now more conscious of the need for flexibility and sensitivity to children's abilities and interests.

CHART I

PEOPLE INVOLVED IN SCHOOL PROJECT

SCHOOL
- 13 TEACHERS
- 1 PRINCIPAL
- 1 SECRETARY
- 300 STUDENTS (APPROX.)

SCHOOL BOARD
- 1 CONSULTANT

UNIVERSITY
1) FACULTY:
- 1 CO-ORDINATOR AND STUDENT ADVISOR
- 2 STUDENT ADVISORS

2) STUDENTS:
- 7 INTERNS
- 1 GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

CHART 2 PROPOSED ROLES OF PEOPLE INVOLVED IN ART PROJECT

Classroom teacher:

1) Bring students to art room at scheduled time
2) Observe with a purpose
   a) materials used (organization of room and materials)
   b) dialogue between teacher/student, student/student, student/self
3) Notes

Student teacher or Intern:

1) Dependability
2) Acceptance of constructive criticism
3) Establishing rapport with pupils and group control
4) Establishment of specific purposes, goals, or concepts

Supervising teacher:

A) At university
1) Assist in planning lessons
2) Review of developmental stages of children's art.

B) At school
1) Evaluate lessons immediately and give feedback
2) Conduct group meetings to share and learn from each other (moral support).

Graduate Research Assistant

A) At university
1) Become acquainted with interns prior to project
2) Become aware of lessons, themes and supplies required.

B) At school
1) Written and visual documentation (observer)
2) Helping with lesson preparation and supplies (participant)
3) Recording and presenting data (reporter).

CHART 3 PROPOSED CURRICULUM AND SUPPLIES FOR PROJECT

WEEK I	THE PERSON	- CRAYONS - PAINT (GOUACHE) - MANILLA PAPER
WEEK II	THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT -where we live -the school	- OIL PASTELS - PAINT - CLAY - COLLAGE (SCISSORS, GLUE) - MANILLA AND CONSTRUCTION PAPER
WEEK III	WHAT DO WE DO IN OUR ENVIRONMENT -games -home -sports -friends	- OIL PASTELS - PAINT - CLAY - COLLAGE (SCISSORS, GLUE) - MANILLA, CRAFT, CONSTRUCTION PAPER
WEEK IV	THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT - transportation - neighbourhood - people	- ALL MATERIALS

GETTING STARTED ...

Andrée Letendre

As student teachers, what would our role be in a milieu where the quality and amount of art taught is greatly dependant upon the classroom teacher's interest, confidence, and own artistic abilities?

Usually, teachers taught art in their own classrooms. The unused art room was cleaned up and organized for the purpose of our 'séjour' at the school. While doing this, I was wondering how art classes would be perceived by the class teachers. Was it an important part of the education process or was its significance only defined as a support for the other subjects?

If I were to bring new art experiences to the school settting, I felt that I had to be very well prepared as well as adaptive to unexpected situations. To me, every single teaching strategy would have to be well defined from the point of view of motivation, exploratory potential, and creative opportunities.

A deep faith in what I was doing kept me motivated. The development of children's perceptual sensitivity became a most important part of the educative process involved in my art lessons.

ABOUT CURRICULUM ...

How can I present both theme and materials? Once having chosen the theme, what strategies should I undertake? Which medium would best suit and motivate the children? Would first grade children respond much differently than 'fourth graders'? If so, how differently? When and how should I interfere with the class? On what level should I dialogue: on a one to one basis or in a general announcement?

My general objectives were always to help children evoke their feelings about themselves and their peers, about the environment they were living in, and what they liked. With this in mind, I felt I had to first experience their world before I could predict and plan specific lessons. I then found myself confronted with the concreteness of their language and experience. As a result, I tried to build a progressive process where the individual's curiosity would be challenged and awakened. Every single notion had to be explained, and I tried to do this through drama, visual domonstrations, and in making them question and find an answer. In order to stimulate and enrich their imagery, the introductory questions were posed to heighten their sensitivity of themselves within the physical world and to bring into sight other possibilities.

With this in mind, let me quote one of Merleau-Ponty's statements:

> "Il n'y a pas de vision sans pensée. Mais il ne suffit pas de penser pour voir: la vision est une pensée conditionnée (...) elle est excitée".[1]

1. Merleau-Ponty. L'oeil et l'esprit.

My overall tendancy was to allow some time for the children to manipulate and explore the material so as to avoid frustration due to a lack of technical knowledge during the realization period. With this 'general to specific' philosophy, I feel the lessons were well adjusted to the children's needs.

CLAY MAKING ...

I am making a monster.

I am making a building.

It will be bloody.

I want to make a city.

My monster will be horrible.

I will make a country.

I am making animals.

I am making people.

I want to make a rabbit, but ... I don't know how ... hum ... maybe I do!

I am making a skeleton. Skeletons have bones.

Here! Look at my rabbit! (GnGnGn).

Hey! Look at mine: SUPERMAN the great American hero! (OuhOuhOuh).

ABOUT COLOUR MIXING ...

When motivating the children for a painting activity in which there was to be the depiction of their house, I gave a few explanations about the use of paint. The children's curiosity was excited when I asked what colours could be made by mixing. They were then encouraged to explore the possibilities of colour mixing.

Grade I:

When asked to mix as many different colours as possible, most students did not really understand and just mechanically mixed the paint. I had observed that the depiction of the house was either made of pure colour taken directly from the paint tray, or of colour mixed all together: which made the overall tone look 'muddy'. I wondered if a child of that age could control the quality of colours.

In this regard, Lambert Brittain writes:

> "Color is not as important as paint. This may sound contradictory because color and paint are usually considered to be basically the same thing. In one short painting series, children were given fewer and fewer colors to use until they had just blue paint available. It was then noted that the children began to pay more attention to the painting itself rather than spending time mixing the paint or adding one color to another on the paper which ended up being a big gray mass".[2]

Grade IV:

At the grade four level, children seem to understand better than at the grade one level what the transformative process involved in colour mixing is all about. However, only a few of them responded in the expected way. I can recall two boys in this class who systematically recorded every colour they found, and became very involved in the mixing process itself. Their subject matter (the house) became an excuse for putting down a few of the colours they had discovered.

Considering the outcome, one has to wonder wether such a 'scientific' way of experimentation and recording should not be confined to a lab situation since it does not relate directly to the child's graphic evolution or search for expressive imagery. If it is brought into the

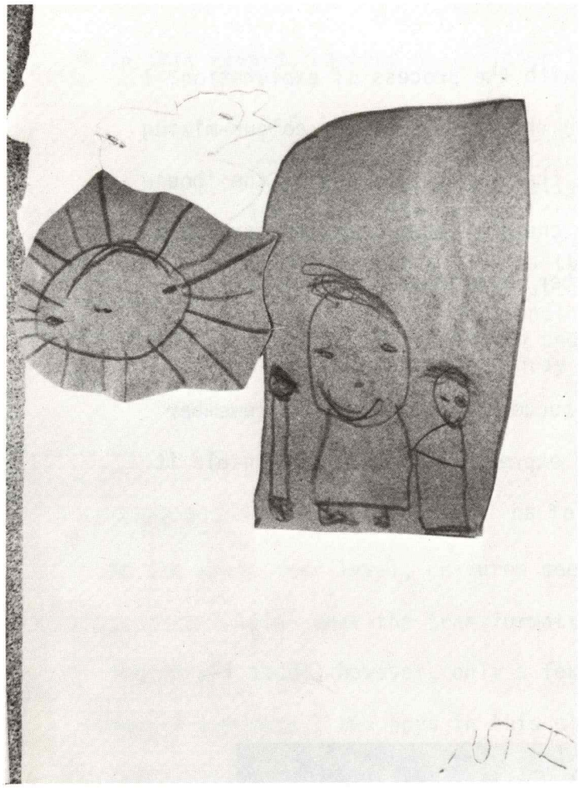
2. Brittain, Lambert.

the art room, how should one deal with the process of exploration? I personally think that it depends on the context of the colour-mixing activity. In retrospect, it may be that the objectives of the 'house lesson' were not explained clearly enough: there seems to have been a conflict between the subject matter (the house) and the exploration of colour for its own sake.

Although the activity was still a success, I shall always remember that since colour is a language of expression, one has to enable it to speak on its own in the making of an image.

CHILDREN PAINTING

Ilana Kuska



Isasou, age 4.

Mondays and Wednesdays from 9-9:30 a.m. the kindergarten children and I were to make art together for the next four weeks; with lesson plans at hand, systematically we were to cover the art art activities I had planned for them. On the first day I introduced myself and my assistant Helen to 15 enthusiastic pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children.

Christine, Claudia, Buffy, Jason, Monica, Pawel, Anastasia, Christine, Shane, Veronica, Amy, Kelly, Isasou, Rodney, and Gary. Their small size astounded me; they were little people with tiny hands and faces and bright eyes eager to paint the world red and green and yellow.

We learned to pretend in our conversations with each other and the children's paintings soon became make-believe mirrors of their world. We spoke of shapes and colours, of trips to the jungle and of houses that were really castles, that were really barns, that became horses, that were really fire engines.

" I am going to be a fireman when I grow up".

"Me too".

"Me three".

Eventually the lesson plans became almost irrelevant to what was really happening in the classroom. Art activities such as color exploration suggested 'free' and gestural paintings; the fluidity of the paint became a medium for dreamy and bizarre 'conversations', brush strokes, names scrolled backwards, or up, or down; lines, arabesques, and geometric shapes were juxtaposed in a wild array of color. The communal painting, involving the mixing of paint, created exciting colors. Some were painted on to a large sheet of paper. others were transformed into other colors.

"Look, I made chocolate milk".

Art was play-time, paint-what-I-feel-time.

"This is me and my parents and the house where I live".

Art was always in the context of the children's awareness of who they were, who the people around them were, and who else they would like to be.

"I paint what I am ...

I am what I paint".

Art was carrying down carboard box overflowing with crayons and pastels, paint and paper and large paintbrushes. Art was putting together tables to paint on, sharing water jugs and sharing ...

Four weeks of drawings, painting and make-believing ended quickly, and if our experience at Westmount Park School was to simply plant seeds in the children's garden time will nourish their growth.

KINDERGARTEN

"color exploration"

We closed our eyes and imagined all the different colors in the universe ...

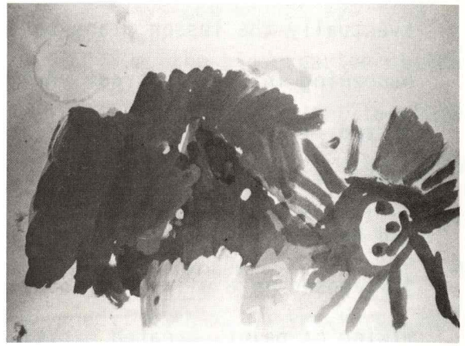
Then we learned how to mix paint in our containers ...

and transform the colors into shapes and images on our paper ...

Sometimes the colors overlapped each other, or were next to each other

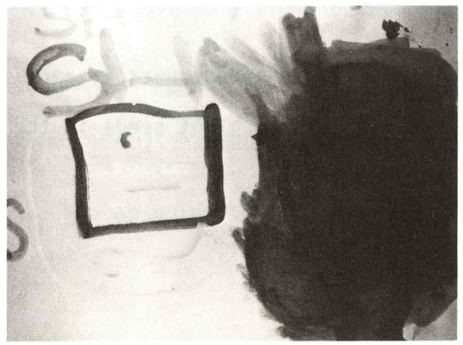
and sometimes we made the colors change by painting one color on top of another ...

We then painted our own portraits.

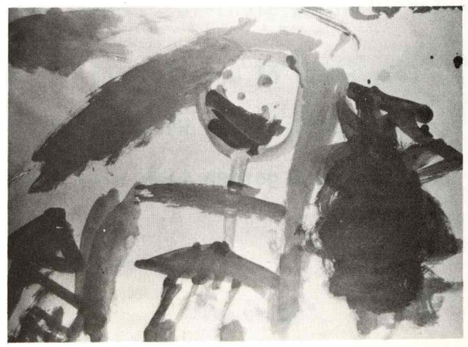


Amy

Gary



Shane



Christine

Diary 1982 -Grades 2 & 3

Marie Lise Chabot

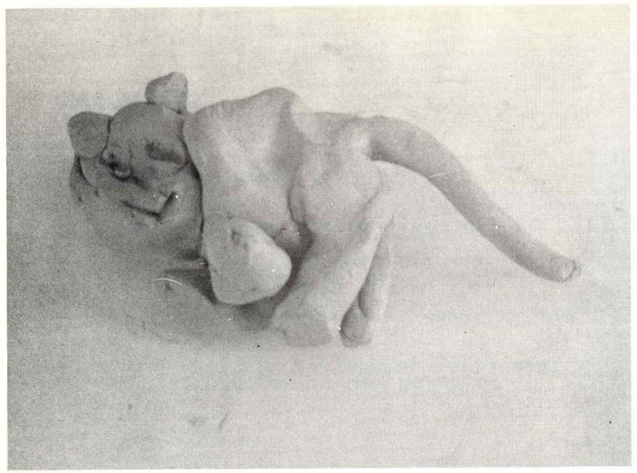
Today we were working with clay: most of the children were really excited by the idea of manipulating this new medium. Many students had previous experiences with similar media, but they were still interested in clay.

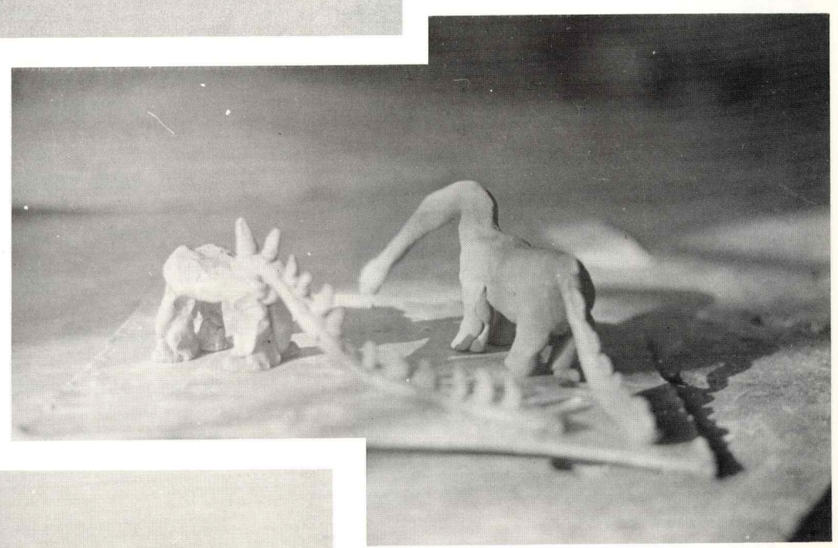
The topic was: "Our favorite animal".

- When we look at an animal, for exemple a dog or a cat, what do we see?
- A bunch of hair!
- Yes, but what else do we see?
- Four legs.
- Yes ...
- Eyes and ears.
- How many eyes?
- A tail.
- Two eyes and two ears, Miss.
- And what else?
- Hair.
- But miss, if our favorite animal is a bird, we don't see hair; we see feathers!
- Yes, exactly. Now, we are ready to work with clay, one thing we have to remember: if we want our animal standing up, we have to build big, fat legs.

(Last week, I was in High School with adolescents. This week, I am here, what a change between the age levels, I feel like I am living on another planet!!).

- Miss, may I build a dinosaur?
- Yes, you may. Call me Marie-Lise, please.





I regret that I could not learn and remember each student's name. I taught in Westmount Park School for only two weeks. While I was not in charge of taking the attendance, I still feel that for a good relationship with the students it is important to know each of them by name.

We were involved in the last lessons, and were having our second experience with clay (on the subject of 'sports').

- What kind of motion is your body making when you are practicing a sport?

- When I am playing tennis my feet are like this (showing the posture to the group), and my arms are moving like this. (So short, the two weeks ... Oui, si court et si vite passées!)

- Yes, and you?

- When I am playing hockey, my feet are like this (showing the posture to the group).

- But ... Are you able to skate with your feet placed like this?

- Hum ... No ... When I am skating, I put my feet like this (showing the posture again).

- No, Miss, he won't be able to shoot the puck like this ...

- Miss, he is handling the hockey stick the wrong way and ...

- Miss! Miss! Let me show you ...

What should we do with the clay?

Should we give back the works to the students?

But the works in clay are coming apart!

Should we 'destroy' those works and recycle the clay?

I am convinced that for children, working with their hands in a medium (making three dimensional figures, etc .), has many good effects on their development. But two sessions is not enough, I think, to draw such conclusions.

- Miss, may we finish this work next session?
- No ...
- Why not?
- Because there is no other session ...

ME AND MY FRIEND(S) PLAYING A GAME

Beatrix Di Palma

The oil pastel drawings in this lesson resulted from a motivation in which music, and free walking movements have been integrated as a means of creating 'action'.

As the music stopped, the children each touched, with both hands, the friends closest to them. This was repeated several times in order to establish the atmosphere of a game. Consequently, children started to laugh, giggle, and jump across the room as a result of 'having fun'.

When asked to account for their feelings about this experience, they suggested:

"It's feeling other people",
"It's making friends",
"It's like musical chairs".

Teacher: Can you see this as a game?

Children: Yes.

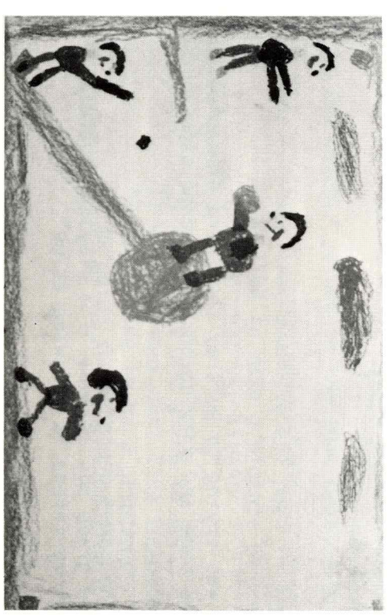
Teacher: Were you alone while moving across the room?

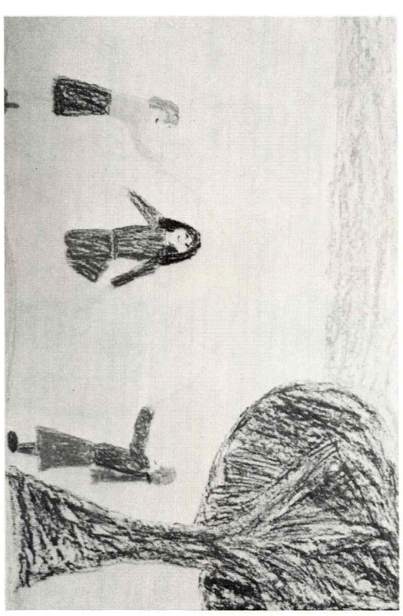
Children: No, with friends.

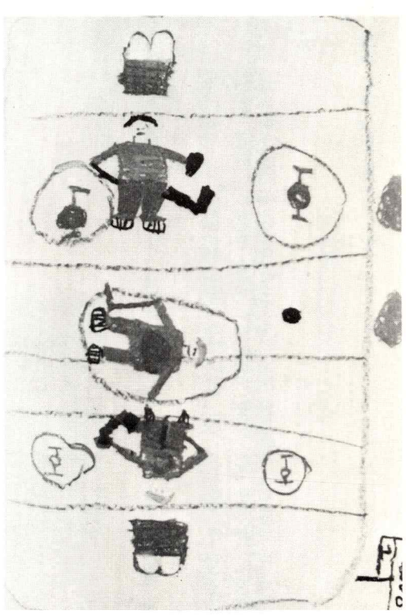
Teacher: Let us hear the types of games you like to play with your friends.

The teacher wrote the names of these games on the black board. As the children were ready to begin their drawings, they were asked to recall the environmental setting in which their games took place in terms of inside/outside dimensions and characteristics of the particular environment.

Although the majority were not familiar with oil pastels, they were motivated by their interest in the subject matter. They became more and more aware of shapes and colours as they drew their self-image with a friend playing with objects such as dolls, pinball machines, snowmen, guns, balls, etc.

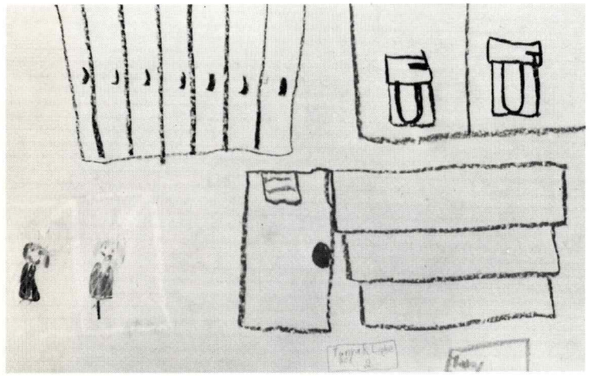




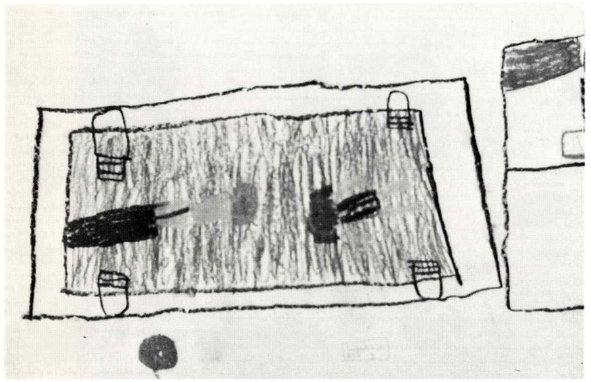


One child explained her reason for continuing her drawing on the back of the page as follows:

> "There is a sauna where my friend and I go after swimming. It is at the end of the pool. You just go through a door, to get to the sauna".



Front of page: SAUNA



Back of page: SWIMMING POOL

This second-grader was trying to portray the third dimension and time by actually turning the page and drawing on the reverse side.

Page 35:

Grade 3: Some of the games depicted.
Lower left: A second grade boy stated, "I'm playing baseball. I'm catching the ball my friend is throwing at me".

THE PARADE

In this lesson, the children were engaged in a 'make-believe' parade-performance involving costume-wearing and music. This performance was intended to inspire them to do drawings of themselves wearing a costime of their choice.

Asking the class wether they had ever been to or seen a parade aroused positive replies. They briefly described their experiences. They were sitting in a circle in front of pre-arranged packages. They were then asked to open the packages. The packages contained dress-up costumes including hats, scarfs, and dresses. When all were dressed, they looked at one another to get a sense of the variety. They realized that no two costumes were alike.

First child: "Your dress is longer than mine",

Second child: "My dress has flowers. Her dress is only one colour",

Third child: "His scarf has stripes".

The music commenced and the teacher said, "Let's march!" Some children sang and clapped their hands while others swung their arms and legs as they marched. The teacher joined in the fun, dressed as a clown.

Teacher: "Now that you have all been in a parade, how would you like to make a picture of yourself wearing a costume that you like?"

Children: "I know what I'm going to be",
"I want to look just like Superman",
"I would like to be a princess",
"I am going to be dressed like a soldier".

CLAY PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Helen Alemany

NOTES:

Holding a discussion about animals: "Does anyone have a favourite animal? or would anyone like to have one?"

Children manipulating clay to experience the material more closely.

Closing the eyes while poking, punching, twisting, to get the feel of the clay in their hands.

Reminding them of the animal discussion and asking them to make their animals. "Remember to make the body and legs fat so that the animal will be strong".

"Teacher, look, I'm making a dog, and this is his house".

"I'm making a cat".

"I'm making an elephant".

Most of the children started out making animals, but I was the one who would learn the most that day. There was definitively a 'gap' between myself and the children. A force far stronger than my lesson plan was gaining ground. A few children began, and then, before I knew it, the whole class was involved in a process I had not predicted. After making the animals that I had asked them to make, they joyfully rolled the clay into balls and started over again, and made cars, and rolled the clay into balls, and then flattened them into pancake shapes.

"Look", said Stephanie, "I've made a birthday cake". She ran off to the corner of the room to get popsicle sticks to stick into her clay. "It's

my birthday today!" Then four or five children ran off to get popsicle sticks and made birthday cakes. Some children made fences around a garden, and a house. Some put sticks in their cars, but no animals ... not one animal was left. They were involved in a very organic process: imaging, taking the image apart, and imaging again. They were exploring 'every' possibility of the clay.

Needless to say, I was quite upset. What had happened to my lesson? When I tried to stop the birthday cakes, something else emerged ... so I gave up directing the action. At the end of the class, the children happily rolled the clay into balls and threw them back into the bag. I left the class, worrying that I had nothing to show for my efforts.

I had a fixed idea, and had assumed that it would be the same as the children's, but I discovered that that was not the case. As an art student, I can remember a particular drawing class in which I had captured the essence of the model very quickly, and so I felt that I was finished. The teacher insisted that I continue; he was imposing his vision on me, refusing to accept mine.

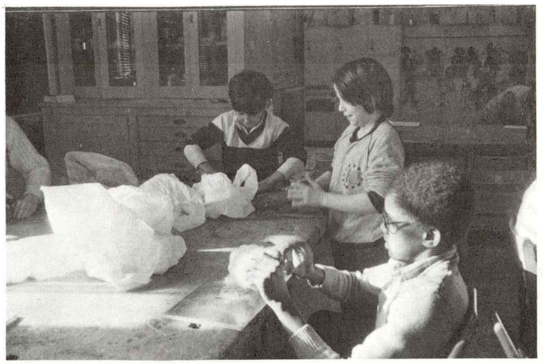
I have learned that there is a delicate balance between being directive and allowing freedom to grow ... which leaves me with some questions. As teachers, in what ways do we interfere in the child's art making process? When should we be directive? When should we let things happen?

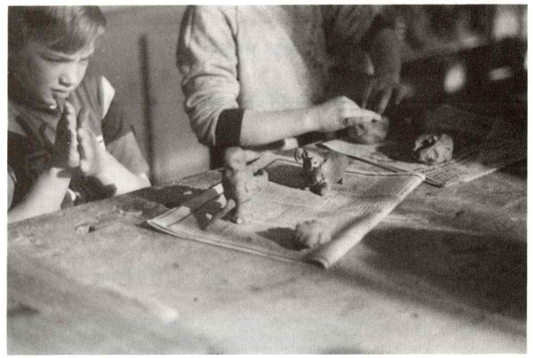
SPECIAL CLASS -GRADES 4-6

Introduction to Clay Sculpture

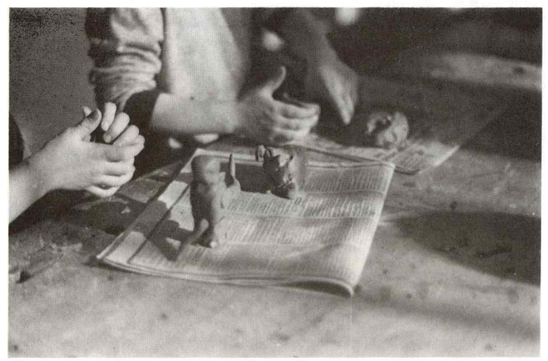
Materials: -squares of woods;
-plastic bags and ties;
-clay modelling tools, old forks, sticks, etc.
-prepared modelling clay (grapefruit sized lump/each child).

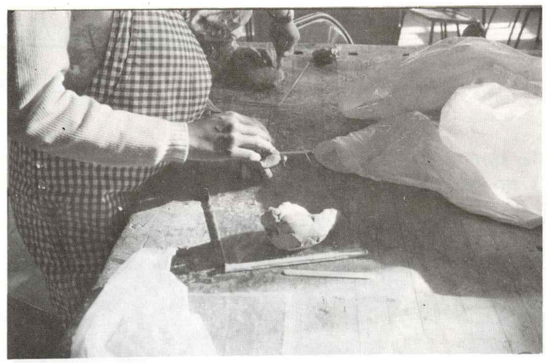
Motivation: The children were asked to close their eyes and feel the clay with their hands, to twist it, pull it, tear it, poke it, etc. Then, they were to open their eyes and examine the clay. The children were asked at this point to see if they could find suggestions in the clay for textures or shapes from which they could create an imaginary animal.





Patrick created the most beautifully expressive beasts. He loved working with clay, and deeply resented the switch back to paper when the clay lesson was finished.





Clay is a wonderful medium because the shapes created exist in three dimensional space; it allows one to create a believable imaginary world.

In conversation with Michelle (figure to the left), she told me she had made a magic boulder along with an entrance to a cave that can only be seen magically. This girl has a rich imagination; had I the time, I would have liked to encourage her to write her stories down. The boy (above right) is showing his turtle.

This was supposedly a difficult class to teach, but they rarely gave me a "hard time" in the art room.

They didn't even want to come to our art class at the beginning of the project, but at the end, they didn't want us to leave.

AN IMPORTANT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Bonnie Gordon

- On the importance of group sharing in the 'perfecting' of a lesson on Colour Mixing.-

One of the many discoveries I made during the four weeks at Westmount Park School was the value of sharing experiences with my fellow student teachers. The following is an example of how this happened.

First Student Teacher: Color Mixing (40 minutes).

The children were asked to create their own colors (following a teacher demonstration with paints on paper) first, by using sheets of coloured cellophane, and secondly, by mixing paints (using the three primary colors plus white).

Results: Small circles of colours in the center of each sheet of paper.

Conference: The advisor suggested that one might try to use words such as 'shapes of colour'; and that during the demonstration, one might try to point out the variety of shapes possible.

Second Student Teacher: Mixing Shapes of Color (40 minutes).

The children were presented with the coloured cellophane. They were then introduced to the concept of many different shapes of colour. The teacher demonstrated, emphasizing the word "shape".

Results: Small squares, circles and triangles of colour.

Conference: The advisor suggested that next time, one might try to use the words 'spaces of colour'.

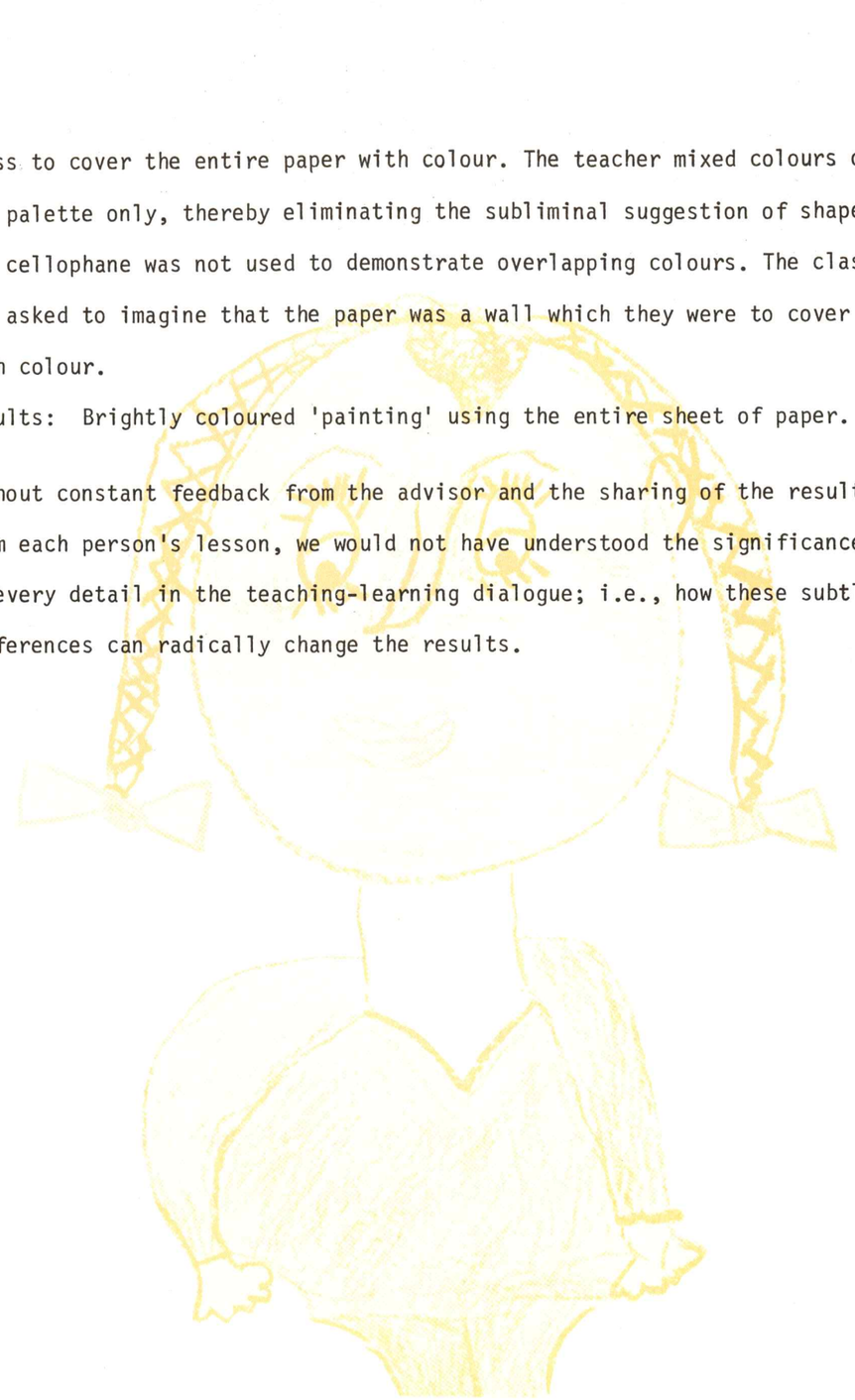
Third Student Teacher: The Wall (40 minutes).

The children were presented with a colour-mixing exercice which motivated the

class to cover the entire paper with colour. The teacher mixed colours on the palette only, thereby eliminating the subliminal suggestion of shape. The cellophane was not used to demonstrate overlapping colours. The class was asked to imagine that the paper was a wall which they were to cover with colour.

Results: Brightly coloured 'painting' using the entire sheet of paper.

Without constant feedback from the advisor and the sharing of the results from each person's lesson, we would not have understood the significance of every detail in the teaching-learning dialogue; i.e., how these subtle differences can radically change the results.



MASKS: INTRODUCTION

The motivating segment of a lesson is one of the most important parts of a successfull art class. This is the time when the student's imagination is sparked.

The following lesson contained a 'mixed-bag' of stimuli:

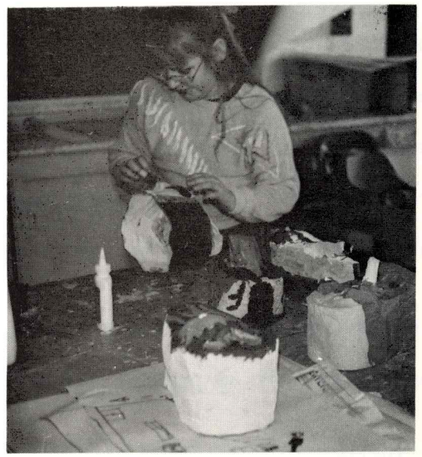
The students entered a dimly lit room and sat on the floor as a group. The mood was already set by the darkness of the room and the closeness of the seated bodies. Elements of magic, and imagination were used to capture the group interest. A voice spoke, softly ... slowly ... and the wooden mask was placed over a face to create a new being, a spirit from another world.

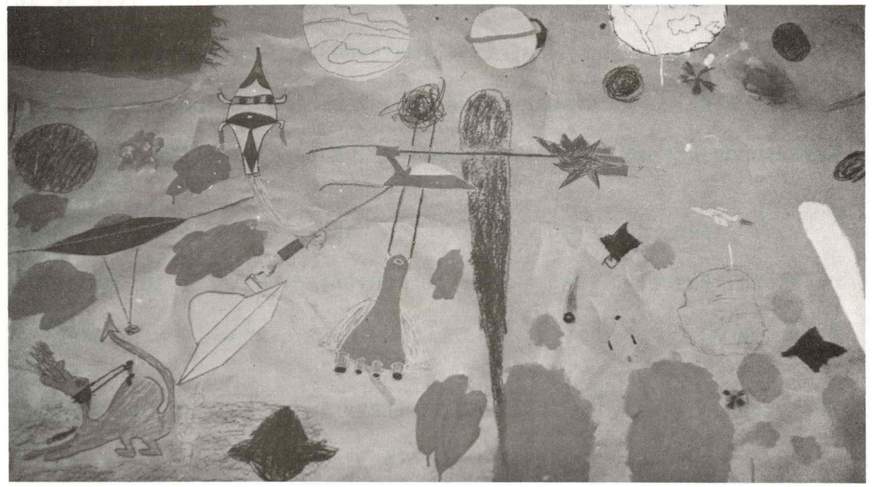
A discussion followed about the importance of the mask and its place in society as well as present day usages. All were encouraged to participate.

To further stimulate the students, and to provide a more concrete image, a group of Inuit and African slides were presented. The focus was on the shape, colours, similarities, meaning and materials.

ART ACTIVITIES

Students were asked to create their own individual masks, using pastel and paper. This image was to be the guide for a 3-D work using papier-mâché (illustrated on the opposite page). The results were highly imaginative.





A JOURNEY INTO OUTERSPACE

- or controling a high energy group of grade five children.-

Problem: How to stimulate, motivate and generally keep under control a very boisterous group of 11 year old children.

Signs of non-creativity: paint fights, pastels soaring overhead, too much neighbour visiting, lack of interest in previous subject matter, etc, etc.

Solution: Class is presented with a choice of topics. Two different work areas are created. Students may work on either or both.

First Mural: A collective work is done on a large sheet of brown Kraft paper, and entitled "Outerspace". It is to be filled with spaceships, star-systems, planets, asteroids, and a lot of imagination.

Second Mural: A similar collective work is done on the theme of a planet in the newly created universe with emphasis on the animal life of this imaginary place. The class is stimulated by a discussion of the possible evolution of dinosaurs. A demonstration follows on the various ways to create an imaginary animal using pieces of torn paper.

Materials: Kraft paper, coloured construction paper, glue, paint, brushes, scissors, pastels, (and a love for anything that has to do with outerspace).

Results: Both groups were very involved in their individual projects. The feedbacks was very positive due to an "unlimited" amount of imagination. The subject matter was fun, and not intimidating. Students of both groups requested permission to work on the murals during their lunch hours.

Interesting discoveries: 1. Certain problems arise when students work together on a single project. Problems such as figure placement, size, colour, and respect of materials.

2. Paint drips when a mural is painted on the wall.

3. There is a need to review colour mixing with the mural painters and to reinforce the value of clean working habits.

Notes on placement: First Mural: An extremely large spaceship was presented by a very determined student, and he put it up regardless of its relationship to the rest of the cut outs and drawings. (It was later removed by a lunchtime painter).

Second Mural: Most Students put their creatures directly on the horizon line, and not on the planet's surface; few worried about the careful placement of the figures, but looked for empty spaces instead.

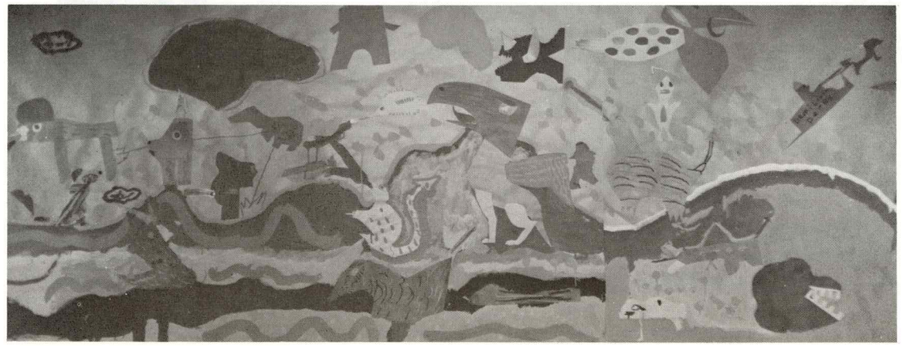
For future use: After the initial introduction to a lesson, try not to 'rush right in' and help. Stand back and watch. Observation is very, very important.

If possible, have a motivation area, it is a great way to organize an energetic group.

Be aware of where the students are 'coming from'. It greatly affects their attention and energy level if you can dialogue directly.

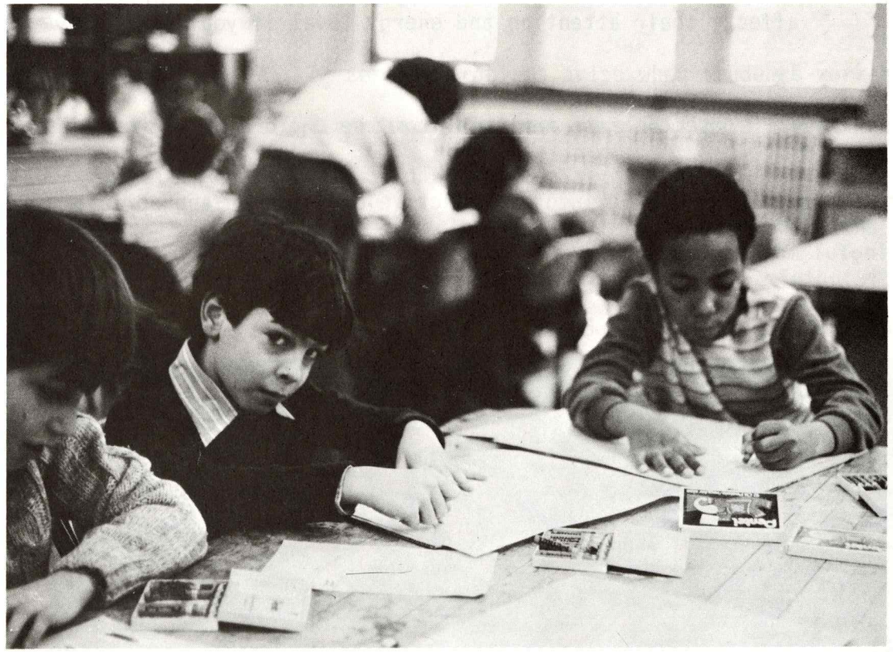
Use concrete thoughts from the child's actual experience.

A problem class was turned into a productive one with an appropriate plan and meaningful motivation.



I believe that as a teacher I should:

- Stimulate the children to use their ideas by motivating them through stories, films and challenging discussions.
- Allow for mistakes as they are part of the learning process.
- Present materials and information when they are needed.
- Lead the children in their thinking to the point where they work independantly.
- Encourage originality and inventiveness.
- Help the child develop his self image by valuing his efforts and his products.
- Provide an example of excitement and enthusiasm for art activities.



CLAY -GRADE 2-3

Hélène Nadeau

Teacher: Do you know where clay comes from?

Albert: Clay came from mud and that is why I hate it.

Teacher: What happens if you pound the clay?

John: I am so mad, yes I am gonna punch it.

(And he keeps banging it all the time the teacher is speaking).

Judy made a child looking at TV; she also made a bed and a baby in the bed. The baby is her brother and she told me: "I've made my small brother".

(Ten minutes later).

Teacher: What happened to your baby?

Judy: I squished it up because he misbehaved.

Later, John explained to the assistant-teacher, "I've made a man on a cross". When asked if it reminded him of a story he said: "Yeah, Jesus is a friend for everyone".

His neighbour said: "Except for the devil; the devil wanted to be one of Jesus' angel".

Afterwards, John made a 'fortune cookie' with the message: "You will have good health". During this time, Walter is doing a giraff. He said "This is a weird giraff".

AFTERWARDS

Both the school and the university had expectations for the art project. In retrospect and from the school's point of view, we were able to take an unused art room and make it functional. During the month that we were there, art was emphasized and became a regular part of the curriculum for the children. The teachers, who often justifiably avoid art activities because of the time involved in setting out materials and cleaning up, could bring their children to a specially set-up room. The children were exposed to materials (such as clay and paint) that are difficult to use in classrooms, and were able to take part in projects (such as the making of masks and murals) that are difficult to organize in regular classroom space. The student teachers made up for their lack of teaching experience with their enthusiasm and art knowledge. As a result, the children enjoyed the art lessons and looked forward to coming to a special room.

The teachers had some reservations about the schedule that had been agreed upon. In practice, they found that having art twice a week was disruptive to their schedule of other subjects.

There were other aspects of our original plan that did not work out as anticipated. We had proposed that the art interns serve as a resource persons for the classroom teacher so that they could co-ordinate their art with the rest of the curriculum. This did not happen except for one or two instances. Perhaps a month was not long enough for the students and teachers to get to know each other. In addition, there were several Mc Gill University students teachers in the school at the same time. The teachers were under pressure to relate to all these extra people in the school while carrying on with the class-

room routine and trying to 'cover' the course of study.

We had also hoped that the classroom teacher might act as observer and help us document the project. However, we failed to provide clear-cut guidelines as to how they would go about doing this, and their function in the art room was sometimes unclear.

At the end of the month, everyone agreed that it was unfortunate that the art room couldn't be kept open after we left, but the lack of an art specialist on staff made this an unrealistic task. One way of prolonging the use of the room and also adressing the reservations to the schedule, had been considered. We are proposing that in future, the internship take place two days a week instead of five, and cover the first semester rather than one month. In this way, the children could have art once a week, and the classroom schedule would be more normal.

From the university point of view, the project was successful in many ways. It was an effective group learing experience, in terms of both its intensity and vitality. In their effort to develop teaching skills and curriculum content, each of the interns was able to identify a particular issue that should serve as a focus and a bridge to the 'real world' that lies ahead.

In summary:

Hélène was impressed with the significance of the child's dialogue while working. She also noted the effect of the teacher's intervention on the graphic evolution of the child and indicated the intention of doing further study in that area.

Marie-Lise was particularly interested in the potential of clay and three dimensional art media for the child's artistic development.

Helen was also interested in the role of the teacher, especially in regards to how teacher expectations and understanding of the child's level of artistic development affects the art activity.

Beatrix realized how important motivation is in the teaching of art.

Bonnie felt that the experience had been a dramatic one in terms of her own development as a teacher, particularly the opportunities for learning in working and sharing with other student teachers.

Ilana was concerned with the sequencing of art lessons and the cumulative effect of learning.

Andrée was impressed with the adult's influence on children's work, and with how the art curriculum is perceived by the school as a whole.

The experience has demonstrated clearly that schools and universities working together in a mutually beneficial arrangement, can strengthen the place of art in the elementary curriculum.